STRAY THOUGHTS.

A Collection of Verses.

LENNOX AMOTT.

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BY

LENNOX R. P. C. AMOTT.

"Oh! friends regretted, scenes for ever dear,
Remembrance hails you with her warmest tear."

Byron.

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TO

ARCHIBALD ROUGH

THIS SMALL VOLUME IS

DEDICATED

IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF THE PAST

BY

HIS FRIEND.

PREFACE.

THIS is a small collection of the effusions of, for the most part, my boyhood; many were written at about fourteen years of age.

They are the thoughts of a boy jotted down amid the hum of school-life, whenever he could snatch a few silent moments. Can my readers pardon their simplicity and overlook their many faults?

I am grateful in no small degree to my friends who have so kindly supported me; I am sure their assistance has been most cordially appreciated.

L. AMOTT.

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STRAY THOUGHTS.

EVENING.

The vernal breezes sweep
With sweetest coolness o'er my fevered brow;
They're breathing on my shattered heart the breath,
The faintest echo of that long ago,
Soothing the ruffled tremors of the soul
With melancholy music.
And infant nature smiles a welcome warm,
And heav'n's crimson oceans blaze ahead
In grand emblazonry of sunset, tinged
With golden outline, and the murmuring bee
Hums homeward, laden with the spoils of sunny spring,
And greenest verdure clothes the mossy turf.

Beneath the shade of an o'erspreading oak
Maternal ewes their peaceful shelter keep,
In the falling evening's silent solitude,
Tending the loved ones of their little flock
As night creeps on along the country scene,
And vesper bells do tinkle far away.
The wingèd wand'rer soars thro' the stirring air
Trilling its lullabies delightedly;
The wearied elms incline their sleepy heads,
Wafting their dreamy accents at my feet;
The drowsy foliage bids the rev'ries rise
And wells the tears in one deep channel'd stream,
Dimpling the careworn cheek with silent grief,
Whilst many a leaden burden heaves the breast.
Now the sounding horn bids all the cattle
Seek th' accustomed note across the meadows,
Bright with the happy smile of buttercups;
And by the saddened stream that still,
As long ago, trickles on in modest flow,
Laving the tired feet of drinking kine,
Bending contentedly to idly quaff
The cool and luscious water, limped and pure,
Which chants with pensive music thro' the dale,
Breathing its perfume o'er the adjacent meads,

Then starts to life in glistering cascades.
Meanwhile the gloomy shadows lengthen
And the sombre clouds close up, leaving behind
A misty aperture of streaky red ;
Silently all nature slowly drops
In one oblivious dream.

LINES SUGGESTED BY THE CENTENARY.

WHAT, what are the words of those far-away voices
That gaily move onward with banner and song?
'Tis the chanting of little ones, sweet and unbroken,
They unite, they unite in a numberless throng!

Their faces are bright with unspeakable gladness,
And they fervently breathe in their infantine lays,
From the depth of each tender and innocent bosom,
The holiest balm of devotional praise.

See, see how they rally beneath the bright standard
With smiles of content as they joyfully sing;
Lord, may they inherit Thy mansions of glory,
And range round the standard of Jesus their King.

And as 'mid the glades of yon beautiful forest
They gleefully join the convivial repast,
Lord, grant they may taste in the radiance of heaven
The bounties prepared for Thy loved ones at last.

And as the tree planted increases in vigour,
So strengthen their faith in this valley of tears,
And grant that each heart may be patient and humble,
And growing in wisdom as well as in years.

March onward, ye host, and be watchful and prayerful,
He, He will protect thee, thy Author Divine,
And with unblemished conscience and hearts firm and ready
Every comfort, every blessing, shall even be thine.

PASSING AWAY.

The day was far spent and the evening advanced
With twilight's dim shadows and gray,
And, dearly admiring the beauties of eve,
In silence I strolled on my way.

And life seemed a dream as I thought of the years
That had flitted along one by one,
As I sat on a velvety hillock of green
And watched the descent of the sun.

As I passed thro' the forest of aspen and fir
At my feet the leaves withering lay,
And as I uplifted them singly I saw
The first touch of autumnal decay.

And here on a leaf on the soft verdant turf,
  And there on a flow'r, ere its fall,
I saw that a Finger, almighty in power,
  Had penned the death-warrant for all.

Ah yes! the death-warrant for foliage and flower
  Was stamped upon all things around,
And soon o'er the mountains the chill night-winds swept
  And hummed their elegiac sound.

And told in low voices their story so weird,
  They told of the pillow of death,
How man should return to his earth once again
  When God had arrested his breath.

I thought of the Future and mused on the Past,
  On the grave that was ever so nigh,
And I wept an adieu and an elegy sad
  To the years passing hastily by.

I read in the sky, in the twilight's still hour,
  And the cloud's fleeting splendour by day,
The words which are ever, yes, ever so plain,
  "We are all of us passing away."

Ah ! could we interpret the whistle of birds,
The brooks as they dash on their way,
Or the cry of the grossbeak, 'twould moan in our ears
The warning, " We're passing away."

And the hum of the insects, or cry of the finch
Would ever, continuously, say,
As if to remind us of years we have lost,
" We're passing, we're passing away."

LINES ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND.

One summer's eve, within an ivy bower
Where childhood's joys had seen so many an hour,
Where, in the labyrinth of my restless thought,
I found the pleasing quietude I sought,
I lay me down to invite a sweet repose
And lull the noisy tumult of my woes.
But ere my thoughts had gained oblivion's towers,
Or rested in unreal fairy bowers,
Upon a mossy bank I just espied
Two tender flow'rets growing side by side,
And they, encircled in each other's fold,
Their tiny brilliant petals did uphold,
With all their slender branches intertwined,
Their life as one, their benefits combined,
For a rash finger, to impede their growth,
Must not have injured one alone, but both.
And thus it is, dear friend, both you and I,
Together cast in Learning's nursery,

Share both alike, with one instructing hand
To guide our puerile courses and command,
To hold us both in check, and, should we stray,
To teach us to submit and to obey;
Our hearts are bound together that, indeed,
If one be pierced the other too will bleed,
And in life's early journey here we run,
And now we feel our hearts, our interests, one.

THE OLD, OLD HILLS.

How oft ye old hills have I wandered upon ye,
  And silently pondered how rugged your mien,
When the tinges of evening stole softly upon you,
  And naught save your shaggy old wastes could be seen.

How oft have I gazed on your desolate stillness,
  And thought, ah ! how grand is your noble old form,
When either the cloudlet swept gaily above ye,
  Or braving the tempest, defying the storm.

Oft, oft have I wandered amid your still valleys,
  When in large heavy drops the disconsolate tear
Rolled sadly and slow on my care-beaten bosom,
  Outpouring my sorrows with nobody near.

With no one to sympathise, none to befriend me,
When the waves of adversity sullenly rolled,
I hopelessly stole to your haven of slumber,
With moorlands around me, unsheltered and cold,

And now, as I gaze on your loaming horizons,
Like a line in the distance unbroken and faint,
Methinks, ah! how sweet, ah! how rugged your grandeur,
What beauties can rival, what finger can paint?

In the gloom and the silence, the last evening glimmer
Dies wearily out at the close of the day,
And the red streak of sunset lies darkly above ye,
Then slowly and sadly it shimmers away.

Oft, oft have I pensively paused when beholding
The sunlight and shadow dance o'er your stern form,
And thought, Ah! how like to life's changeable journey,
First sunlight and beauty, then shadow and storm.

Sweet, sweet are your beauties ye changeless old valleys,
Which seem to re-echo the thoughts that I love;
How peaceful, how tranquil your untrodden regions,
Like sanctified quiet sent down from above.

Like one who seeks sympathy, tired and lonely,
  I rush to your bosom, ye tender old hills,
And pour out my griefs in the ears of sweet nature,
  And list to the note of your musical rills.

And tearfully back o'er the course of my journey,
  I view through dim vistas the scenes of the past,
Ah ! could I but droop like a floweret and wither,
  And slumber amongst your sweet valleys at last.

MY ADA.

The sun was sinking o'er the watery waste
As we with filling canvas left the bay,
And strained our eyes to catch the last long look,
And saw the grand old mountains fade away.

Alas, alas! for loved ones left behind,
A father's warm farewell, a mother's tears,
For gentle Ada weeping on the quay
To sob her weary, long adieu for years.

Soon, soon we ploughed the billows of the deep,
And dear old England vanished from my sight,
I thought of home and those around the hearth
Close curtained from the moanings of the night.

And tho' between us surgy waters rolled,
  I still was with them in their weeping there,
And longed for days to bring my Ada close
  And crown us both a happy loving pair.

Years passed away, I tramped thro' foreign lands,
  And plunged in stubborn warfare grim and red,
Whilst all around, in gory deluge bathed,
  My gallant comrades bravely fell and bled.

Still years rolled on, and wrinkles lined the brow;
  I longed for rest, for home, my native shore,
To press the bosom of that long ago
  That I had learnt in boyhood to adore.

Ah! happy hour, I saw the dear old hills,
  The land of young ambitions proudly rose,
Where infant joys had nursed me in a sleep,
  And lulled me in an innocent repose.

I sought my Ada by the lonely wood,
  Where th' glowing hearth in winter warmly smiled,
Where we were used to gaily sit and chat
  When I was young and she was but a child.

Nursed by the hills and nestling in the dell
  I spied afar the old contented cot;
But in its doors a solemn silence reigned,
  I sought my Ada, but I found her not.

I trod the grass-grown path where violets bloomed,
  And made the pretty homestead look so gay,
They seemed to whisper then of love within
  With upturned smile to meet the sunny day.

But in the shady graveyard close at hand
  I found a spot the fragrant primrose crowned;
Simplicity, with artless fingers, marked
  Who sweetly slept beneath that grassy mound.

Alas! I found the idol of my hope,
  That loved me in my infantine delight,
And wept in bitterness a long adieu,
  Had passed away for ever from my sight.

And plaintive Sorrow, longing to perform
  Her last sad office to the dust beneath,
Had laid a rough-hewn cross above her head
  And scattered here and there a floral wreath.

Then say, O Death, can beauty never charm,
  Nor stir compassion in thy stony breast,
Nor sweetness check thy ruthless finger's haste
  To snatch away the innocent and blest?

I plucked a flow'ret from the tiny grave,
  And turned with saddened mem'ries to depart,
And dropt a tear for her whose smile was stamped
  For ever and for ever on my heart.

AN ELEGY.

Fly, thou sweet spirit, fly,
  Thy mansion is above,
Soar to thy heavenly home,
  Thy God of love.

We saw thy mortal clay,
  We missed thee sadly here,
And as we bade adieu,
  We wept a tear.

'Tis hard to wish thee back
  Amongst us once again,
To wander thro' a life,
  A world of pain.

We saw the black-plumed hearse
  That bore thee slow away,
'Twas from a world of grief
  To spotless day.

We saw thy happy brow
  Pale in its deathy dew,
When Heaven itself was thrust
  Upon thy view.

We crave not thy return
  From climes so bright, so fair,
But hope to follow on
  And meet thee there.

LINES SUGGESTED BY A RINGLET OF HAIR.

A GOLDEN ringlet bound with silken cord!
  Ah! sad memento of a life so fair,
What tales thy beauty tells of hearts outpoured,
  And many a yearning, many an earnest prayer.

Ah! tiny curl, that graced the lovely brow,
  And sank with ease upon its cushioned bed,
I loved thee well, full long before, as now,
  When thou did'st glisten on the fairy head.

Alas! when thou did'st modestly adorn
  The roseate cheek, the bright and pearly eye,
Did e'er I think thy owner could have gone
  And left me friendless to upheave a sigh?

When fondly lavishing thy warmest praise,
  Ah! angel bright, did e'er a feeling rise,
That thou, on earth, should'st end thy happy days,
  And gladly flutter homeward to the skies?

Thou wert too pure, too heavenly, too divine,
  To linger here, upon Time's troublous sea;
Till, o'er thy corpse, thy lap-dog came to pine
  I scarcely thought that thou could'st mortal be.

Ah! look from Heav'n upon my friendless breast,
  And if from Heaven thou can'st shed a tear,
Say, wilt thou not, from thy eternal rest,
  Shed pearls of love upon thy lost one here?

CHANGE.

I saw around me lie
  The scentless Autumn flowers,
That bloomed with fragrance sweet
  In genial sunny hours,
Around me dead and faded,
    And I knew,
That, as those tiny flow'rets,
  I should soon fade too.

I saw the seasons roll,
  One after one dissolve;
I saw the months die out,
  The hastening years revolve;
And Nature's rapid change
  I did in sadness view,
And felt within my weary self
  That I must soon change too.

I saw my comrades fall,
  Who with me fondly played
Along the brilliant, yellow mead,
  Or in refreshing shade,
And the world's bright prospects turn
  With troubles daily new.
And felt, like unto comrades dear,
  That I should soon fall too.

I saw the leafless stem
  Re-blossom soon again,
The wintry snow disperse,
  And sunshine follow rain,
And happy light encircle all
  And skies serene and blue,
And felt that after years of pain
  I should re-blossom too.

THE VOICE OF THE BELLS.

LIST, list to the song of those evening bells
  As they ling'ringly float on the air,
Whilst the blue vault of heaven shines serene overhead
  Flecked by cloudlets all rosy and fair ;
Yes, they have a message, a sweet, sweet message,
  Yes, they have a message for me,
Hark ! Hark to their mellow symphonies
  Over the distant lea, over the distant lea !

What is it, what is it they moan to me
  In their accents of sadness and gloom ?
Do they tell of the earthly wilderness ?
  Do they speak of an earthly doom ?
Yes, they have a message, a sweet, sweet message,
  Yes, they have a message of glee
When they fling and refling their echoes
  Back to me, back to me !

They're calling me hence to my long, long home
  Where the tired-out soul is at ease,
As they mingle their sacred harmonies
  Like feathers on the breeze ;
Yes, this is the message, the sweet, sweet message,
  The message they have for me,
They're wafting my spirit away, away
  Over the surging sea,
And they breathe in their dying accents the strain
  Of the endless eternity.

LINES WRITTEN ON A FRIEND'S BIRTHDAY.

OLD Time speeds on, the fleeting years
  Haste on their rapid flight,
And youth has long since passed away
  With all its smiles so bright.

And age with all its troubles steals
  Upon the human soul,
And, passing o'er our downward path,
  We reach our final goal.

Alas! to us, life's anxious cares
  Our greatest pleasures chill,
But every joy on earth be thine,
  May peace preserve thee still.

And this thy birthday, may it be
  A day supremely bright,
That knows no pain, a day of joy
  In God's all-seeing sight.

And many birthdays may'st thou see
  And life's successful years,
Thine hours unknown to worldly grief,
  Thy days unknown to tears.

Till at the close of life's short breath
  In death's dark hours thou'rt given
To reign thro' all eternity
  A birthday blest in heaven.

THINK OF ME.

Ah! must I leave thee, only comforter,
  Who reigned supremely ever in my heart?
What can it be that makes the tear-drop rise?
  What can it be that makes it hard to part?

Think, think of me, when in the narrow tomb
  In silent sleep, when I have passed away,
And watch no more along the mountain path
  For footsteps gone, where we were wont to stray.

Think, think of me, when weary, when alone,
  Who fondly loved thee here whate'er betide,
When trouble swells upon thy gentle brow,
  And my old place is vacant at thy side.

Think, think of me, when other hearts are near,
  When other loved ones fill the vacant chair
Where I was used to sit and chat with thee,
  With life before us beautiful and fair.

Think, think of me when old with silvered head,
  With happy children clambering o'er thy knee,
To hear the evening tale so often told,
  Around the hearth, then, dear one, think of me.

Think, think of me, when thro' the country lanes
  Thou ramblest oft, alone and unespied
Beneath the tree where we have often sat
  And cut our names in fondness side by side.

Think, think of me, when sorrows bow thy head,
  Think of the times when we so fondly played,
Or when a thousand comforts round thee smile,
  And in succession pleasures bloom and fade,

Think, think of me, when bending sad thy steps,
  Weary and worn, unto my churchyard bed,
And stay and read, and water with a tear
  The tiny violet blooming o'er my head.

Think, think of me, when passed away from here,
  Ah yes! from here, a world of sad reviews,
Of hope soon blasted and of dark regrets,
  A city full of partings and adieus.

And journeying on thro' life's intricate maze,
  Where'er thou goest, wherever thou may'st be,
When I am gone and hidden from thy sight,
  Then, then, my loved one, think, oh! think of me.

LINES ON THE MONTH OF MAY.

HAIL ! gentle May, the spring of my delight,
With beauty crowned thou dawn'st upon my sight,
As with the splendour of thy glorious train
Mellifluous breezes sweep the verdant plain,
Whilst on thy hand redundant bounties cling,
And countless treasures ride upon thy wing,
And yielding to the poet's thoughtful eye
The grandeur of thy pompous majesty,
And as thou roll'st thy splendent stream along
Let all the woods resound with gladdened song.
Hail ! yet again, thou blithe unshadowed Spring,
O'er glade and copse thy gorgeous mantle fling,
Return again, and crown with joyous light
A thousand dales within the fading sight,
And thus reveal the ever-gracious Power
Which steers the course of every fleeting hour.
Thus 'mid thy dreams of joy, so calm, so bright,
The mind sails on to barriers of light,

And contemplates the countless spheres which roll
Thro' Heaven's eternal mansions, and the soul
Is bent in rev'rence, as those suns revolve,
Till Time at least shall bid them all dissolve.
Ah ! helpless mortal, canst thou claim the while
The faintest ray of Heaven's parental smile?

THE ONE I LOVED.

In the cool of the day I despondently gazed
At the purple and gold in the west,
And I fancied I saw amid cushions of cloud
The form that I ever loved best.

I fancied I heard her soft sigh in the breeze,
And her whisperings low in the air,
And in the despair of affectionate grief
I fancied she wept with me there.

I glanced overhead at the heavens above,
At the limitless regions of space,
And methought in that canopy calm and serene,
That I saw her pure, beautiful face.

And in every planet that glittered above,
That sweet smiling eye did I see,
That on earth was my glory, my own cherished pride,
As it lovingly smiled upon me.

And wherever I am, or wherever I go,
There's a heart side by side with my own,
And I feel, as I glide thro' the journey of life,
That I'm never, I'm never alone.

TO A FRIEND.

Ah ! happy sun, arise and greet
  With kindly smiles the morn,
When such an infantine reward
  To grateful hearts was born.

And lead me forth thro' silent groves,
  'Mid fir trees tall and slim,
That I may tune my favourite reed
  And sing alone of him.

And pour thy beauties o'er me here,
  Serenely now as ever,
Like as thou did'st in days of old,
  When we were both together.

And shed within his chamber snug.
  Thy tiny Autumn ray,
And shine upon his youthful cheek,
  And cheer him on his way.

Now, having sought thy gen'rous aid,
  I'll dedicate my song
To dear old Charlie, with my reed,
  A warm one, if not long.

Good friend, as I'd express a thought,
  On this thy natal day,
The following verses shall contain
  What I have now to say.

'Tis mine to breathe an upward prayer,
  That thou may'st gladly see
Full many a birthday here below,
  And ever prosperous be.

That thou may'st feel that inward joy,
  That pleasure thou may'st know,
When many a favourite hailed thy smile,
  And whispered long ago.

And tho' 'tis said that distance lends
  Enchantment to the view,
It is, my friend, a great mistake—
  At least 'tis so with you.

For true it is, I fain would greet
  Thy boyish smile again,
That oft has shed its radiance round,
  And soothed the brow of pain.

And in my daily walks of life,
  I think it cannot be,
That words which once enslaved the heart,
  Can fade from memory.

Good-bye, for now, and may He grant,
  Whose arm is strong to save,
Protection thro' thy walks in life,
  And shield thee in the grave,

And guide thy spirit to that peace,
  To join that countless band,
And raise thee from a world of woe
  To view thy native land.

WAITING.

I WATCHED beneath the glorious sun,
The glaring heat of noon,
For her, the beauty of my heart,
My love was coming soon!

And in the breeze that fluttered by
There was a note of mirth,
That told me there was none so fair,
So beautiful on earth.

And as I lay upon the sward,
Watching the winding lane,
My heart was leaping with the thought
Of meeting her again.

And with the flush of buoyant youth
  I watched the lonely mill,
Which lay along the country road
  Upon the distant hill.

'Twas afternoon, an anxious hour
  Had slowly passed away,
But still no sound disturbed the scene
  Save zephyrs at their play.

Time flitted on, and yet I watched
  Across the meadow green,
But still no wand'rer met my eye,
  No Mary could be seen.

I watched and waited till the sun
  Descended to the plain,
No voice responded to my call,
  I waited but in vain.

And purple tinged the distant mead,
  The night began to fall,
I listened once again, but still
  No answer to my call.

The blithsome lark had gone to rest
  And darkness came apace,
I neither heard my darling's voice,
  Nor saw my darling's face.

For long I watched, with many a sigh,
  And called her pretty name,
And tho' the long, long evening passed,
  My loved one never came.

And now with roses red and white
  I often sadly go,
Unto the churchyard, where she sleeps,
  My love of long ago.

In grief I often sadly weep
  Within that little coomb
Where I have watched for her who now
  Lies silent in the tomb.

A PRAYER.

Ah! fondest love that bids my trouble cease,
  Let Thy dear Word alleviate my breast,
Soothe once again my grief-worn soul to peace,
  And calm once more my burdened brow to rest.

Upon my griefs out-pour Thy healing balms
  And seal my woe within Thy tender love,
O! let me feel those ever blessed calms,
  Thy heavenly smile descending from above.

Clothe every action, every word of mine,
  With holy rev'rence to Thy sacred name,
O! take my heart, to be in glory Thine,
  And bless my life with Thy divinest flame.

Raise me, O Lord, above the things of Time,
  O make me holy in Thy blessed sight,
Might I but see Thee in that fairer clime
  Rob'd in a garb of never-failing light.

Extend Thine arm from Thy high mercy-seat,
  Protect and shield me through life's treacherous wave,
O ! lay me humble at Thy blessed feet,
  My sinking spirit, Jesus, do Thou save.

O gentle Lord, I crave Thy blessing now,
  I look, in grief, for help alone to Thee,
At Thy dear Word I will submissive bow
  And feel the joys of Thy eternity.

LINES WRITTEN ON LEAVING SCHOOL.

FAREWELL ! dear halls of boyhood's fair delight,
Farewell again, before I quit thy sight,
Before I leave thy hallowed roof in tears,
The honoured dome of childhood's fleeting years.
With bosom bleeding and a heart in pain,
I leave thee never to return again
As one who feels thy brightness, shares thy smile,
And blesses thee for blessings infantile.
I gladly sport once more in fancy's flight
Along thy fragrant meadows, fair and bright;
Inhale once more thy soft and balmy air,
As long ago, in years unknown to care.
I quit thee sadly with a quiv'ring breast,
And thy young joys, so beautiful, so blest,
That nursed me ever as I thoughtful strayed,
Within the precincts of thy solemn shade.
And as I leave the threshold of thy door,
With thoughts not buoyant, as they were before,

Ah ! from my breast a heartfelt prayer doth rise,
That, flutt'ring heavenward, echoes thro' the skies.
I oft have played within thy happy walls,
Enjoyed the moments in thy noisy halls,
And slumbered sweetly, as the hours of night
Rolled o'er a brow so happy and so bright;
Loved to acknowledge as the day arose,
Relinquishing the sweetest of repose,
The blessing which alone a hand of grace
Had scattered widely o'er our ruddy race.
I love the mem'ry of thy pleasant days,
E'en tho' the glories of a thousand ways
Of pleasure, wealth and comfort should be mine,
I'd still prefer the happiness of thine.
Dear home of boyhood, father of the hours,
When life's elastic days unfold their powers,
I still would pace thy sunny groves once more
Where I have loved to linger oft before,
And 'grave my name upon the sappy bark
Of some old oak within thy lordly park.
Ah ! on thy lettered walls may still be seen
The old mementos of each passing scene,
And could that name upon thy paneled oak
The moments of its origin evoke,

The misty tales of merriment reveal
What boyish hearts have felt, and love to feel;
Ah! What a world of mem'ries 'twould unfold
Of sturdy youths in childlike mischief bold;
Of many a boist'rous deed and cruel thought,
Tho' mem'ry looked again and found it nought.
Oft has the angry glance, inflamed, and sour,
Reigned momentarily supreme in pow'r,
While choking rage responded in the breast,
Soon to subside and sink again to rest.
But when together we did gaily live,
Forgiven freely, ready to forgive,
'Tis ever thus, time flew unheeded by
And brought its changes and its mockery.
Oft have I lingered in thy rural grove,
Arm linked in arm, with those who seemed to love,
And chatted gaily, as when interests blend,
Of things we did, and what we did intend,
With life before us as a fairy bower,
Joy beaming o'er us every passing hour,
With air-built towers constructed but to fall,
Which brought us afterwards no joy at all.
Such is the hope of youth, the fond desire
To which mistaken childhood's days aspire,

Aiming thus wholly at those phantom joys,
Which seem to haunt alone the hearts of boys,
As young ambitions one by one arise,
Which busy life can never realise.
Ah! what an error oft in this hath been,
When life's dull troubles cloud the happy scene,
And sweep the remnants of Hope's little store
Upon the winds, tho' smiling bright before,
And drop the curtain o'er the days of youth,
And grin in mock'ry, hideous and uncouth,
Conducting thro' Time's long and narrow road,
The weary traveller, breathless with his load.
Then say, O Clotho, why the thread of life
Should sometimes weave, at others banish strife;
Wherefore, with partial hand, thou has decreed
That some may flourish and that some may bleed?
Farewell, thou lordly palace of delight,
E'en tho' thy passing years were fair and bright,
I've sought a corner of thy rural shade,
When tears bespoke the guilty or dismayed,
When sullen grief o'erspread her leaden cloud,
Or lonely and neglected, wept aloud,
When friendship, once enkindled, was deceived,
Or those who thought they loved had idly grieved.

Has it not also ever once been mine
To mourn a friend, or unconsoled repine
When loving hearts were rashly torn away,
And fondness cooled with each o'ercounted day?
Ah! Youth, altho' thy years discretion lack,
With all thy faults I fain would have thee back
To grace this dull existence once again,
And soothe the cruel ravages of pain.
Oh! if I had thee once again to greet,
E'en all thy griefs, thy sorrows would be sweet,
And mem'ry now, persistent on thy joys,
Speaks of the days when we were merry boys,
Seeking thro' meadows for the cowslip root,
Or plucking off the ripened hedgerow fruit.
And now, alas! I fix my last, long gaze,
With tear-dimmed eyes and thoughts of sweeter days
Upon the couch on which I long, long slept,
On which at times I have in sorrow wept,
Where I have slumbered innocently too,
Alas! alas! I bid it now adieu,
A fond and long good-bye.
Farewell to thee, thou agèd, time-worn tower,
Where, every Sabbath in the morning hour,

We've tuned the sweetness of our Maker's praise,
Sought and acknowledged Him in all our ways,
In adoration lisped the hymnal song;
To Him who gave our blessings all along,
Guided us, helped us always hitherto,
Ah! may it be so all the journey through.
Farewell once more, I ne'er again shall feel
Thy music's sacred grandeur o'er me steal,
Or tread thy little pathway to admire
The sweetness of thy rustic village choir,
Pondering sadly as the silent eve
Breathed in its calm the power to relieve.
Farewell! ah yes, 'tis but a little word,
'Tis daily on the tongue and often heard,
And as it leaves the lip we all must feel
How wide the wound which Time can never heal.
And as the eye is blinded by a tear
It tells us of our short-lived journey here,
And speaks of Heav'n the haven of the blest,
Where storms assail not, trouble is at rest,
And endless welcomes, hail the weary home,
Fainting and tempest-tost across the foam.
And in the whisp'rings of each conscious heart,
We find it even so, 'tis hard to part;

Ah! gentle friends, let those so fond, so dear,
Once press the hand, and shed the mutual tear,
For Mem'ry weaves her melancholy charm,
Like the dim echo of a cloister psalm
That dwells upon our bosoms like a sigh,
Then slowly floats away.
Alas! that we who love so well to greet,
The friend who finds in friendship a retreat,
Should have so soon to bid adieu, and find
That we must leave the lovely past behind.
But now 'tis done, and Time will have his way,
What tears can remedy, what words delay?
But in my walks of life, in pain or grief,
How sweet a solace, what a dear relief,
To snatch, when boyhood's flown and cares combine,
A passing retrospect of thee and thine.

THE DAYS OF LONG AGO.

THERE is a something in thy burdened sigh,
A something in thine accents sweet and low,
That tells of brighter, happier days than these;
Ah yes, how fair, the days of long ago.

There is an unknown something in thy tone,
Which seems those long-passed summers to restore,
And seems to bid affection glow again
As once it did in days we've seen before.

Thy tender glance points backward to the Past,
And summons scenes that long have passed away,
And breathes revival to full many an hour
Supremely bright, full many a cloudless day.

I love the thought, I would not chase away
  The burning tear that trickles o'er the cheek,
Which gives the tired feelings a relief,
  And soothes a troubled heart too full to speak.

And now in solitary grief I think
  There was a beauty in those days of old;
A gleam of sunshine o'er life's rugged track,
  A warmth of love that never could grow cold.

Ah precious hours, thy joys have hurried by
  And mingled with the irrevocable Past,
Where mem'ry singles out thy joys supreme,
  That shone awhile but flickered out at last.

Come, dear one, to my side as long ago,
  Once press the hand and shed the mutual tear,
And whisper low of moments past and gone,
  When love had bound us warmly year by year.

Adieu! adieu! the moments haste away;
  Life's troubles daily cloud us, grim and cold;
And when thou'st left me think of all gone by,
  And weep a farewell to the days of old.

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

We met in summer on the road,
  That country girl and I,
Each heeded not the other's step,
  But passed in silence by.

We often met, morn after morn,
  Beside the orchard gate,
And never knew each other once
  To be a minute late.

I loved the sunny lanes and nooks,
  And tuned a cheerful lay,
And passed, as I was always wont,
  The damsel on her way.

One morn, while chanting some sweet air,
  A song my childhood knew,
I paused attentive when she passed,
  For she was singing too.

And as I write I think how sweet
  That voice to me did seem,
It smote the panels of my heart
  And whispered in my dream.

A month elapsed, and still I snatched
  Some sweet forgotten strain,
And then, as if to answer mine,
  She sang the same again.

But now I'm old, and Bess is too,
  And we are man and wife;
For we have walked together through
  Full forty years of life.

Hush! now she dozes in the cot,
  Her silvery locks adorn her,
With open Bible there she sits
  Within the chimney-corner.

Our little ones that cheered the home
  Are laid yon ash below,
Both, both are gone, and now we feel
  'Tis time for us to go.

'Twas Heaven's will that they should stay
  But for a little while ;
He took them up to bask beneath
  The radiance of His smile.

God taught us both to struggle on
  Thro' trouble and thro' care,
And He will call us both away
  To go and meet them there.

FRAGMENTS.

WITHIN these pages thou did'st find,
  In early boyhood, dear delight,
But now the volume's laid aside
  That cheered a heart so young and bright.

Yes, laid aside, but where art thou?
  I long have missed thy happy smile,
Thou, too, art laid aside, and we
  Have parted for a little while.

F AREWELL sweet wand'rer on my desert heart,
A lone I weep for days that now are past,
R eflection backward points to joys that long
E re now have shone, but flickered out at last.

W hen aching pain forbids the tongue to flow
E nfettered silence more than words can tell,
L ove, tho' so great, must find it hard to breathe,
L onesome and sad, her long, her last FAREWELL.

Adieu, dear friend, the summer breezes sigh,
  And lulling strains above me and around
Enchain the heart with mem'ries, sweet yet sad,
  And Evening breathes her melancholy sound.

Though Fortune cheered, and bosoms knit to thine
  Engaged thy favours and received thy smile,
Oh! say thou wilt but once remember mine,
  E'en tho' it be for but a little while.

Tho' some may miss thee with thy ruddy cheek,
  And wish thee back amongst us as before,
Tho' some may softly speak thy name again,
  And some regret, I can alone deplore.

Adieu, my friend, once more that painful word,
  While heavy tear-drops load the swollen eye,
Others may press thy hand and turn away,
  But I, neglected, heave a single sigh.

When friendship proves a dream, a thing of naught,
  What sighs can remedy, what tears recall?
What is the friendship of this friendless world?
  A day's short love, if such it is at all.

We crave for sympathy to undisguise
  The silent troubles of each passing day,
We find in one a brother and a friend,
  But see, alas, he smiles then—turns away.

Ah! can it be that after years of joy
  This happy union should be thus forgot?
E'en childhood's very accents breathe deceit,
  And hope is hollow—what, alas, is not?

Then wonder not at the deceiver's art,
  A friend he is not who would cause a tear,
Or, fickle as the doubtful winds around,
  Receive a welcome but return—a sneer.

Who now to cherish, who to clasp the hand?
We have but one, ah, one enduring Friend;
Then why despair since He will guide our way,
And lead us safely onward to the end.

LINES SUGGESTED BY THE WEDDING OF R. W. D. HARLEY, ESQ., TO THE HONOURABLE PATIENCE RODNEY.

Ring out thy merry, merry peals,
  Let constant shouts of joy be thine,
While all thine echoes far resound,
  Thou calm, sequestered Leintwardine!

O Wigmore! never cease thy flow,
  The music of thy chimes inspire,
Roll forth the joyous tidings far,
  And fill thy hearts with reverend fire.

Urge those glad notes, O Brampton! on,
  Let joy revigorate thy lays,
And all thy chanting souls be one
  In warmest ever-flowing praise.

And let thine ancient ruin tell
  Of God-sent mercies long before;
Repeat thy tale to all around,
  And let th' ecstatic cannon roar.

Let thousands boast, both far and wide,
  Their bounteous Harley's honoured name;
Let "Harley" be the constant theme,
  And ever in the mouth of Fame.

May love and peace be ever yours,
  Ye newly-wedded happy pair;
May gladness all your halls surround,
  With sunshine ever reigning there!

May God His richest blessings shower,
  Upon the sweetness of your home,
May ever-circling happiness
  Be felt through each resplendent dome.

May years of comfort and of ease
  Be yours, with ever-glowing love,
Till borne away from things of time
  To an eternity above.

BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE.

All, all was mirth, and buoyant hope, and love ;
The sward was parched, the summer sun above
Poured all around his glories and his joy,
And bronzed the beauty of the buxom boy.

The gentle parent stroked his locks and smiled,
And stayed to fondle his belovèd child ;
And as he stooped, the jewel of his pride
Was bathed in shadow at his father's side.

'Tis even so with us, when cares obscure
The God of love so infinite, so pure,
When gloom beclouds, He fondly stoops to bless,
And teach the mercies of His holiness.

REPLY TO SOME PRETTY VERSES.

How true indeed is that which thou hast said,
  Pathetic warbler of Arcadian birth;
How blest a strain, how comforting, how sweet,
  So full of sadness—yet so full of mirth.

O! Bard of beauty, lend thy song again,
  Like words of loved ones o'er the dark blue sea,
Say, wilt thou ne'er, when years have flitted by,
  Have just one gentle thought—a thought for me?

Soon, soon our paths divide, I sadly ask,
  O'er life's tumultuous ocean what may be?
No voice responds, but yet my bosom burns
  With one short prayer—a tender prayer for thee.

What language can describe, what sighs convey,
  What music paint, what deathless poets sing
Those sweet emotions of each panting soul?
  Love, when so strong, becomes a nameless thing

Cares will combine and trouble cast its weight
  Upon thy youthful bosom, now so free;
Heaven help thee safely onward—and implant
  Just one, tho' one neglectful, thought for me.

Sorrow shall part us where we met in joy;
  May Glory wreathe the laurels on thy brow;
A prayer can scarcely ask, a breast implore,
  More happy hopes than thou possessest now.

Adieu! hard word, that lingers on the tongue,
  For years perhaps thy smile I may not see,
Or ne'er again; and it may be the last
  Adieu for time and for eternity.